



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

JOHN STEINBECK

**FILE NUMBERS: 9-4583
AND 100-106224**

SUBJECT John Steinbeck

FILE # 100-106224

SECTION _____

PAGES REVIEWED 107

PAGES RELEASED ~~105~~ 105

PAGES REFERRED ~~105~~ 0

From
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TO
Official indicated below by check mark

MEMORANDUM

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

Solicitor General	
Assistant to the Attorney General	
Assistant Attorney General Arnold, Anti-Trust	
Assistant Attorney General Clark, Tax	
Assistant Attorney General Shea, Claims	
Assistant Attorney General Littell, Lands	
Assistant Attorney General Berge, Criminal	
Assistant Solicitor General Fahy	
Mr. Hoover, Director, FBI	
Mr. Bennett, Director of Prisons	
Mr. Schofield, Immigration and Naturalization	
Judge Martin, Director, War Risk Bureau	
Mr. Lawrence, Director, Bond and Spirits	
Mr. Quinn, Administrative Assistant	
Mr. Holtzoff, Special Assistant	
Mr. Townsend, Special Assistant	
Mr. Smith, Special Defense Unit	
Mr. Lyons, Pardon Attorney	
Mr. Palmer, Director of Personnel	
Parole Board	
Mr. Donaldson, Chief Clerk	
Mrs. Plumley, Appointment Clerk	
Mr. DiGirolamo, Division of Records	
Mr. Adler, Division of Supplies	
Mr. McKavitt, Librarian	
Mr. Carusi	
Mr. Allen	
Miss Bell	
Mrs. Johnson	
Miss Lamke	
Miss Coulson	
Mr. Franke	

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Carson
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Kramer
Mr. McGuire
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy

3300

OFFICE OF
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



May 11, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HOOVER

Will you note the attached
letter of John Steinbeck, the playwright?

h.b.
Francis Biddle
Attorney General

Mr. Tolson.....
Mr. E. A. Tamm.....
Mr. Clegg.....
Mr. Glavin.....
Mr. Ladd.....
Mr. Nichols.....
Mr. Rosen.....
Mr. Tracy.....
Mr. Carson.....
Mr. Coffey.....
Mr. Hendon.....
Mr. Kramer.....
Mr. McGuire.....
Mr. Quinn Tamm.....
Mr. Nease.....
Miss Gandy.....

100-106224-1
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
15 MAY 22 1942
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
File

EX-1

May 11, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HOOVER

Will you note the attached
letter of John Steinbeck, the playwright?

Francis Biddle
Attorney General

SP-NA 24 2 25 AM
F.B.I.
RECEIVED-SECURITY DIV
MAY 10 1942

td

THE BEDFORD
118 East 40th Street
New York

Caledonia 5-1000

Dear Mr. Biddle:

I'm very sorry I haven't been able to see you.

Do you suppose you could ask Edgar's boys to stop stepping on my heels? They think I'm an enemy alien. It's getting tiresome.

Congratulations on the S.S. matter,

/s/ John Steinbeck

COPY

100-106224-1

KTD:lem
5-18-42
RECORDED
EX-100 100-106224-1

MAY 21 1942

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Reference is made to your memorandum dated May 11, 1942, transmitting a letter addressed to you by John Steinbeck, in which Steinbeck complained that he was being investigated as an enemy alien by representatives of this Bureau.

I wish to advise that Steinbeck is not being and has never been investigated by this Bureau. His letter to you is returned herewith.

Respectfully,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

Inclosure

SENT FROM D. O.
TIME 2:00 pm
DATE 5-21-42
BY W.M.

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Holloman
- Mr. McGuire
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

MAY 26 1942

RECEIVED
MAY 20 8 03 PM '42
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
RECEIVED
MAY 20 1942
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

del
J. Edgar Hoover
J. Edgar Hoover
J. Edgar Hoover



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

CC-287

Mr. Tolson _____
Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
Mr. Clegg _____
Mr. Glavin _____
Mr. Ladd _____
Mr. Nichols _____
Mr. Rosen _____
Mr. Tracy _____
Mr. Carson _____
Mr. Coffey _____
Mr. Hendon _____
Mr. Kramer _____
Mr. McGuire _____
Mr. Harbo _____
Mr. Quinn Tamm _____
Tele. Room _____
Mr. Nease _____
Miss Beahm _____
Miss Gandy _____

EX-12511

October 27, 1942

5:05 P. M.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. E. A. TAMM

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

Miss Collins in the Attorney General's office telephoned
and advised that the Attorney General wanted to see the
Bureau's file on John Steinbeck tomorrow morning (Oct. 28th).

Respectfully,

D. STALCUP.

5:45 P. M. Miss Collins was advised that the Bureau
had conducted no investigation concerning John Steinbeck
and her attention was called to the Bureau's memorandum
of May 21, 1942, in which the Attorney General was so
advised.

ds



9 NOV 7 1942

RECORDED

100-106225-2
12 OCT 28 1942

EX-36

J. Edgar Hoover
Director



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.
October 30, 1942

CC-287

Mr. Tolson ✓
Mr. E. A. Tamm ✓
Mr. Clegg ✓
Mr. Glavin ✓
Mr. Ladd ✓
Mr. Nichols ✓
Mr. Rosen ✓
Mr. Tracy ✓
Mr. Carson
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Kramer
Mr. McGuire
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Tele. Room
Mr. Nease

EAT:RFK
Call 6:05 PM
Typed 7:45 PM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

Re: JOHN STEINBECK - AUTHOR

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

Miss Beahm
Miss Gandy

173

In response to her previous request I telephonically advised Miss Collins in the Attorney General's office that we had in our possession two pamphlets which concerned the above-entitled individual. One of these entitled "Their Blood Is Strong" was written by the subject and published in 1938 by the Simon J. Lubin Society of California. The material in this pamphlet is similar to that contained in his book "The Grapes of Wrath" and concerns the activities of migratory agricultural workers. The other pamphlet, which was furnished to us in May, 1938, is entitled "Writers Take Sides" and contains the opinions of several hundred authors as to whether they are for or against Franco. I informed Miss Collins that the subject was one of the authors quoted therein and further advised her I would make these pamphlets available to her for whatever purpose she may need them. Miss Collins stated she would appreciate the use of them very much.

Respectfully,

Edward A. Tamm



58 NOV 18 1942

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

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100-126224-3			
F	B	I	
15	NOV 8	1942	

West Palm Beach, Florida.

December 3, 1942.

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover,
Chief of F.B.I. Washington, D.C.

Subject: JOHN ERNST STEINBECK
Complaint: Proposed agitation of
Japanese Relocation
Centers, California & West.

Sir:--

For some time past I have resented books by Steinbeck, for they portray such unrepresentative pictures of our American life in rural districts. I live near the Everglades farms district and most of the migrants out there live better than I do, while they are here for the picking season.

46578

Steinbeck's name is John Ernst Steinbeck. His father was a German, born in Florida of German parents, according to the story in WHO'S WHO in U.S. writing circles. But of course the author furnishes the information about himself.

My reason for writing this is that it is rumored that Steinbeck is now gathering information for a heart-throb about the sad condition of Japanese in Relocation Centers in the West. I think it would be best for all concerned that he be not permitted to issue such a story until after the war-- if ever.

Under strict enforcement of postal regulations, Steinbeck's books would not be permitted to go through U.S. mails, because of their scurrilous and obscene passages. These are held up as examples of the immoral life of the U.S. in foreign countries opposed to us. I understand his books have been translated into German and circulated as "horrible examples," but I cannot prove this.

THIS LETTER DOES NOT NEED A REPLY.
IT IS ONLY SENT TO YOU. AS INFORMATION.

You may have all this information from other sources; but I will explain why I am writing it. During the other World War I made reports direct to [redacted] when they did not concern local matters, but came to my attention regarding other sections of the country. I had authority to do this.

Where is Mr. Steinbeck?
Is he attempting to get information concerning government housing of soldiers?
He might dress in uniform and hang around incomplete camps like Boca Raton, trying to get information as to inadequacy of camps before they are completed and outfitted perfectly. I hope this will not occur.

RECORDED & INDEXED

Respectfully yours

Mail address [redacted]

"H-13"

RX-2

JOHN STEINBECK

100-106224-34
 100-106224-34
 TEB:DCW

46577

Date: December 19, 1943
 To: Mr. Dillon S. Myer
 Director
 War Relocation Authority
 Barr Building
 Washington, D. C.
 From: J. Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
 Subject: JOHN ERNST STEINBECK

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
 HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
 EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
 OTHERWISE

For your information and whatever consideration you may
 deem advisable, there is set forth below the pertinent portion of
 a communication recently received at this Bureau from one [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] West Palm Beach, Florida b7c

West Palm Beach, Florida,

December 8, 1943.

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover
 Chief of F. B. I. Washington, D.C.

Subject: JOHN ERNST STEINBECK
 Complaint: Proposed agitation
 of Japanese Relocation
 Centers, California
 & West.

Sir—

"For some time past I have resented books by Steinbeck, for
 they portray such unrepresentative pictures of our American life in
 rural districts. I live near the Everglades farms district and
 most of the migrants out there live better than I do, while they are
 here for the picking season.

"Steinbeck's name is John Ernst Steinbeck. His father was a
 German, born in Florida of German parents, according to the story in
 VEO'S VEO in U.S. writing circles. But of course the author
 furnishes the information about himself.

"My reason for writing this is that it is rumored that
 Steinbeck is now gathering information for a heart-throb about the
 sad condition of Japanese in Relocation Centers in the West. I
 think it would be best for all concerned that he be not permitted
 to issue such a story until after the war-- if ever."

Mr. Tolson
 Mr. E. A. Tamm
 Mr. Clegg
 Mr. Glavin
 Mr. Ladd
 Mr. Nichols
 Mr. Rosen
 Mr. Tracy
 Mr. Carson
 Mr. Coffey
 Mr. Hendon
 Mr. Kramer
 Mr. McGuire
 Mr. Quinn Tamm
 Mr. Nease
 Miss Gandy

DEC 21 1943 P.M.

20. 44 45 21

52 JAN 8 1943

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WAR DEPARTMENT
Military Intelligence Service
Washington

AUG 13 1943

Subject: Letter of Transmittal.

To: Honorable J. Edgar Hoover,
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation,
United States Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

The attached communications are forwarded for your information and such action as you consider advisable.

For the Chief, Military Intelligence Service:

L R Forney

L. R. FORNEY
Colonel, General Staff Corps,
Asst. Executive Officer, MIS.

Enclosures: *M*

ENCL 1

D143 / 2nd disc

DECLASSIFIED BY 2333 PLS *Army letter dtd 8-2-79*
ON 1-22-79 *LA*
644/ha

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

100-106224-
F B
35 AUG 18 1943

EX 4

55 SEP 4 1943

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

*Headquarters Western Defense Command and 4th Army
ACGS, 8-2, Presidio of San Francisco, California -*

IX-0/S-14305c

27 July 1943

SUBJECT: John E. STEINBECK, 15041 De Gado Drive, Sherman Oaks, California

TO : Chief, MIS, War Department, Washington, D. C.

1. Attention is invited to our CI-R1 report dated 27 January 1943, Subject as above, representing investigation conducted in the vicinity of Los Angeles, California, and memorandum report dated 25 April 1943, Subject as above, covering investigation conducted in the Second Service Command previously forwarded your office.

2. Inclosed find CI-R1 report dated 13 July 1943 representing investigation conducted in the vicinity of San Francisco, California.

3. This office does not concur in the recommendations by the reporting agent in closing report. In view of substantial doubt as to Subject's loyalty and discretion, it is recommended that Subject not be considered favorably for a commission in the Army of the United States.

4. Undeveloped leads will not be followed in the absence of request, and this case is considered closed in this office.

For the AC of S, G-2:

BORIS T. PASH
Lt. Col., M.I.

Chief, Counter Intelligence Branch

1 Incl: (in trip)
CI-R1 dtd 7-13-43

DECLASSIFIED BY 2333

ON 1-22-59

6001614

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

100-106224-3X1

WAR DEPARTMENT
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

CONFIDENTIAL

File No. LA-3493 TL-3/8-143056
Date 15 July, 1948
Subject:

Investigation requested by CIC, SIO, San Francisco, Calif.
Office of origin A G of S, G-2, WDC & 4th Army
Report made at San Francisco, California
Report made by G. O. SWINDELL, Agent, WDC
Period covered 3 June, 1948 to 12 July, 1948
Character of investigation Personnel - S
Status of Case CLOSED

JOHN E. STEINBECK
18041 Polk Road Drive
Berkeley Oaks, California

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION:

By letter dated 16 February, 1948, from the A G of S, G-2, WDC and Fourth Army, Presidio of San Francisco, California, to the CIC, Branch Office, G-2, WDC and Fourth Army, San Francisco, California, it was requested that a proper investigation be made in this area to determine the discretion, integrity and loyalty of Subject, and his suitability to hold a commission in the army of the United States.

DETAILS:

Fourteen-point Family Outline: This CI-MI supplement provides record prepared at Los Angeles, California, under date of 27 January, 1948, made by Special Agent B.L. Johnson, CIC, Los Angeles, California.

1. Personal Data:

Born:	27 January, 1908, Salinas, California.
Present Age:	41 years
Description:	Height 5' 11"; weight 207 lbs.
Characteristics:	Loyal, honest, sincere, competent, thorough, sensitive nature. (Names A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H)
Marital Status:	Received interlocutory decree of divorce 12 March, 1948.

2. Family Data:

Father, John Ernest Steinbeck (deceased), born in St. Augustine, Florida.
Mother, Olive Esther Steinbeck (deceased), born in Salinas, California.
Sister: Mrs. V.F. Baker, Carmel, California.
Wife, Carol Steinbeck, interlocutory decree of divorce, 12 March, 1948.

Forwarded, _____:

MID, Washington, D. C., _____ copies
IO, Los Angeles Office _____ copies
Procurement District _____ copies
THRU: BIO, LA _____ copies

Reviewed and Approved:

For the AC of S, G-2:

RICHARD C. HAM

Major, Inf.

Chief, Investigations and Section Counter Intelligence Branch

WAR DEPARTMENT
O. C. R., Form No. 10

CONFIDENTIAL

Incl #1, 2

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1-4483 EL-8/2-14306
JOHN E. SCHMIDT

3. Education: 1915 - 1919, Salinas Union School, graduated; 5 years at Leland Stanford University; majored in Journalism; did not graduate.

4. Employment: At present working for self as an author; has sold stories to the Motion Picture Industry. March 1942 to December 1942, employed as Special Consultant to the Secretary of War, assigned to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. Made an exhaustive study of flying and training, and now writing an official book on this subject. No salary. December 1942 to March 1943, employed by the Office of War Information, 370 Madison Avenue, New York City, as a Foreign News editor at a salary of \$3000.00 per year.

Also Vice-President of the Pacific Biological Laboratories, Inc., for a number of years where he helped to operate a commercial laboratory.

5. Military History: None

6. Unit and Office Check: None

7. Addresses: 1942 to present, 15041 Del Cade Drive, Sherman Oaks, Calif. December, 1941 to March, 1942, New York City, New York. July, 1936 to December, 1941, Los Gatos, California. Subject has lived most of his life near Salinas and Carmel, California, except for the time spent in Los Gatos and on intermittent trips to Los Angeles, New York City, and other parts of the world. (Memos B, H)

8. Residence Check:

Mr. Hugh Porter, 244 California Street, San Francisco California; purchaser of Subject's former residence at Los Gatos. (U) Memo B)
Mr. F. Rainari, neighbor of Subject at Los Gatos, California. (S) Memo H)

9. Organizations:

- *Western Writers' Congress, 1936
- *Committee to Aid Agricultural Organization, 1938. (Memo L)
- *Schneiderman-Darby Defense Committee, 1940 (Memo L)
- *Emergency Youth Assembly, 1937. (Memo L)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LA-3493 EX-9/2-14306c
JOHN H. STRINECK

9. Organizations: (continued)

~~International Union of Revolutionary Writers of
Moscow,
League of American Writers, 1941.
National Institute of Arts and Letters, 1939.~~

10. Principal Amusements: Marine Biology.

11. References: No references given in San Francisco, California area.

12. Acquaintances: Mr. Martin Ray, Saratoga, California. (S) (Name E)
Miss Barbara Burke, 3065 Jackson Street, San Francisco,
California. (S) (Name S)
Mr. H.L. Roberts, Cashier, First National Bank, Los
Gatos, California. (S) (Name F)
Mr. Webster Street, of Union, Martin & Fortants,
California. (S) (Name H)
Mrs. Carol Steinbeck, 425 Harding Avenue, Pacific
Grove, California. (S) (Name I)

13. Credit Record: Satisfactory (Name K)

14. Police Record: San Francisco Police Dept. NR (Name L)
Federal Bureau of Investigation, San Francisco. NR (Name L)
GMI, 12th Naval District, San Francisco. NR but HQ
files refer to one, JOHN STRINECK, PO Box 221, Los
Gatos, Calif. as subscriber to PEOPLE'S WORLD as of
Sept. 1939. (Name L)
American Legion Radical Research Bureau, San Francisco,
California show record of Subject from November 9, 1935
through June 4, 1939. (Name L)
Sheriff's Office, Santa Clara County, Calif. NR (Name M)
Los Gatos Police Dept. NR (Name M)
Salinas, California Police Dept. NR (Name M)
Carmel Calif., Police Dept. NR (Name M)
Monterey, Calif. Police Dept. NR (Name M)

ADVERSE INFORMATION:

1. Subject has associated with individuals who are known to have a radical political and economic philosophy, and with some members of the Communist Party. (Names A, B, C and E)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LA-2492 IL-0/S 143054
JOHN H. STEINBECK

ADVERSE INFORMATION: (continued)

2. Subject received large volume of Communist literature and possessed books expressing radical political and economic views in his library. (Names B, H)
3. Subject's former wife, Carol Steinbeck, registered as a Communist in Santa Clara County in 1938. (Names B, C, G, H, I, J, K)

UNDEVELOPED LEADS: Request investigations as follows:

A & of S, G-2, Red Service Command, Governors Island, New York

- (1) Interview Subject's agents, McIntosh and Otis, 18 East 41st Street, New York City, to determine Subject's associations and activities in that vicinity. Such leads should be developed with particular attention to Communist associations and relations.
- (2) To determine what relations has had with the League of American Writers by contacting the League's headquarters in New York City.
- (3) To contact Major Betweiler, AAF, 25 Broad Street, New York City, who has made allegations that Subject is quite a heavy drinker and has communistic tendencies.
- (4) Make an office and employment check at the office of War Information, 570 Madison Avenue, New York City, where Subject was employed from December 1941 to March, 1943.

A & of S, MIS, War Department, Washington, D.C.

- (1) To make necessary office and employment check to determine Subject's employment as a Special Consultant to the Secretary of War, assigned to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. Particular attention to be given to any possible Communist associations and connections.
- (2) To check with FBI, ONI, MIS and Dies Committee files to determine any record extant on Subject. The Dies Committee should have a resume of Subject's activities written by Thomas Cavett for the Los Angeles Office of the Dies Committee.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LA 2493 EX-O/S 14305
JOHN R. STEINACK

REMARKS AND CONCLUSIONS:

This investigation revealed that Subject is honest, loyal, patriotic and an excellent and sincere writer. Although Subject exercised poor discretion during his early days of writing by associating with some elements of the Communist Party, he was not interested in advancing the cause of the Party but in gathering material for his writings on certain social conditions existing in this country at that time.

Subject wrote various articles which were published by Communist organizations because the economic views expressed were considered radical. However, Subject rejected communist political and economic theories repeatedly and discarded his association with this element when it became apparent that his prestige was being used to further the interests of the Party.

Subject, in this Agent's opinion, possesses the requisites of honesty, loyalty and discretion necessary for a commission in the Army of the United States. Subject is sincere in his beliefs concerning the social and economic situation of the under classes in this country and in his desire to have their lot improved.

Subject is a candid and powerful writer.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This Agent recommends that Subject be given a commission in the Army of the United States if he can be placed where his writing ability may be utilized.

G-2 NOTE:

This office does not concur in the recommendations of the investigative agent, and believing that substantial doubt exists as to Subject's loyalty and discretion, recommends that Subject not be favorably considered for a commission in the Army of the United States. Undeveloped leads will not be followed in the absence of a request, and this case is considered closed in this office.

APPROVED:

T. M. FAIRCHILD
Lt. Colonel, MI
Officer in Charge

MS: Only previously disapproved
for a commission by War Dept.
Personnel Board WAA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

Salinas, California
May 29, 1943
Case No. IX-0/3-14305a

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. SPKINBCK
424 Hardley Avenue
Pacific Grove, California

RE: Covering Memorandum

Three excellent sources of information -- the Marshal Postmaster, Subject's attorney, and Subject's wife -- agree on these points:

1. Subject is not a communist.
2. Subject is loyal, patriotic, honest.
3. Subject is an excellent writer.
4. Subject would make a good officer if his writing ability is utilized.

AGENT'S OPINION

This Agent believes that Subject could pass the requisite of honesty, loyalty and integrity insofar as his commission in the United States Army is concerned. It is the question of whether Subject would be of more value as a civilian employee or as an Officer that higher authorities must decide. If Subject is to be employed by the United States Army in positions in which his great writing ability may be utilized, it is the opinion of this Agent that he should be commissioned.

MARTIN FRANKEL
Special Agent CIO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California
30 June 1943
Case No. XX-0/8-14305e

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

Subject: JOHN E. STEINHECK
15041 Del Sado Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

Re: Interview with Mr. MARTIN RAY, Acquaintance.

On June 9, 1943, this Agent interviewed Mr. MARTIN RAY, intimate acquaintance of Subject. RAY associated with STEINHECK and his former wife, CAROL STEINHECK, during the entire time Subject's residence was in Los Gatos, California. Informant is presently residing on Masson Road, Saratoga, California.

RAY believes Subject to be absolutely loyal to the government although Subject associated with some elements of the Communist Party in his earliest days of writing. Subject repeatedly stated to RAY that he was not a Communist but was interested in the lower-class working people regardless of their particular political creed. RAY explained that Subject had written certain articles for publications which were considered Communistic but that these articles were written to explain Subject's point of view of the social problem involved and not to further the interest of the Communist Party. Subject, according to RAY, gradually realized that he was being used by the Party and severed all connections with this element after his books began to have a wide sale.

CAROL STEINHECK, former wife of Subject, told RAY that she registered with the Communist Party in Santa Clara County in 1938 simply to observe the local reaction and that Subject was strongly opposed to this act.

Following the sale of one of Subject's earlier books, Subject and his wife made a trip to Europe, visiting Sweden and Russia. RAY stated that Subject was deeply impressed by the economic and political policies of Sweden but was not impressed, nor did he discuss, the government of Russia.

Concerning Subject's character, RAY stated Subject's integrity was beyond question. Subject is very sensitive and sentimental; is deeply devoted to his friends and is easily influenced by these friends to grant large favors.

RAY believes Subject should be commissioned in the Army only if Subject's writing ability may be efficiently utilized. According to RAY, Subject would work very hard writing for the benefit of his country but is not qualified to hold a commission in any other situation.

Agent's Notes:

RAY is a close friend of Subject and has tremendous respect for Subject's writing ability. This Agent believes RAY is interested in Subject's welfare as a friend yet was absolutely fair and impartial in his recollections of Subject and Subject's suitability for a commission in the Army.

MEMO B

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, CIC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California
June 14, 1943
Case No. XL-O/S-14308a

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBECK
15041 Del Sade Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

RE: Acquaintance check with Miss Barbara Burke

On June 9, 1943, this Agent interviewed MISS BARBARA BURKE, 3065 Jackson Street, San Francisco, California regarding Subject.

MISS BURKE bought the Subject's first house at Los Gatos and became intimately acquainted as the Subject lived on the premises for a short time thereafter. MISS BURKE believes Subject to be unquestionably loyal, having heard him say that he had never voted the communistic ticket, and was strongly opposed to his wife's registration with the party. MISS BURKE further stated that Subject had always voted Democratic tickets, and was heartily in favor of the policies of the New Deal.

MISS BURKE stated Subject is a very heavy drinker, but she had never seen him intoxicated. Subject's political philosophy, MISS BURKE considered to be merely "leftish" in the social changes calculated to improve the conditions of the working classes, and felt Subject's integrity to be unimpeachable.

Agent's notes: Informant has the greatest respect for the literary work of Subject, but appeared to this Agent to be sincere and candid in her description of Subject's qualities.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, SIC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMO C

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California

June 14, 1943

Case No. EL-O/S-14306a

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN B. STEINBECK
15041 Del Gade Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

RE: Residence check

On June 8, 1943, this Agent interviewed MR. HUGH PORTER, 244 California Street, San Francisco, California, purchaser of Subject's house in Los Gatos.

MR. PORTER did not know Subject personally, but had Subject's belongings moved from the house. He stated that Subject's second-class mail was tremendous, much of it apparently communistic. MR. PORTER read various parts at random and found it very radical. Subject's library, left in the former residence, contained many radical books.

Informant's opinion of Subject based upon observation of conditions under which Subject lived is that Subject is very impulsive, eccentric, and unreliable socially. Informant had no knowledge of Subject's economic or political views except from the circumstantial evidence stated above.

MR. PORTER stated that Subject employed a Japanese house boy, Joe Higahsi, who continued to work after Subject left. HIGAHSI had books, ostensibly propaganda containing pictures of Axis leaders and accomplishments. HIGAHSI is now evacuated to the interior.

Agent's notes: PORTER did not know Subject, but is very much opposed to economic and political views of Subject as indicated by type of mail received and contents of Subject's library.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, CIC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMO D

San Francisco, California

30 June 1943

Case No. IX-Q/S-14305c

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

Subject: JOHN E. STEINBECK
15041 Del Gado Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

Re: Residence Check.

On June 8, 1943, this Agent interviewed Mr. F. RAINEORI, Los Gatos, California, neighbor of Subject, during the time Subject resided in Los Gatos.

Informant stated that Subject was friendly but generally very aloof. Subject, according to RAINEORI, apparently made frequent visits out of town while living in Los Gatos. RAINEORI recalled no derogatory remarks concerning Subject; however, informant had heard that Subject was very sensitive and desired to be avoided by the local people so that he could concentrate on his writing without interruption.

Agent's Note:

This neighbor lived approximately one-half mile from Subject and had little in common with Subject.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, CIC

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMO E

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California
June 11, 1943
Case No. XL-0/S-143054

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN H. STEINBERG
15041 Del Gato Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

RE: Acquaintance check

On June 8, 1943, this Agent interviewed MR. H. L. ROBERTS, cashier First National Bank, Los Gatos, California.

Subject had an account in the bank from July 1, 1936 to June 26, 1941. ROBERTS impression of Subject was that he is very quiet and reserved. Subject usually is very poorly dressed.

Agent's notes: ROBERTS had no knowledge of Subject's economical or political views, and had not heard any derogatory remarks concerning his loyalty or integrity.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, SIC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMO F

CONFIDENTIAL

Salinas, California
May 26, 1943
Case No. 1000/3-14303e

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICE IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINER
423 Hardley Avenue
Pacific Grove, California

Re: Acquaintance Check.

On May 26, 1943 this Agent interviewed **HERBERT STREET**, of **MARTIN & BERGANTIE**, attorneys, Monterey, California, in connection with the investigation of Subject, who has applied for a commission in the United States Army.

STREET said that he is Subject's attorney, has known Subject since 1924, and would classify him as a generous, large, continental Irishman, a bit shy, and yet decisive.

According to **STREET**, Subject's legal and permanent address is 423 **HARDLEY AVENUE, PACIFIC GROVE, CALIFORNIA**. Other addresses are temporary, dependent upon the current locale of his work. His personal effects and furniture are at the Pacific Grove address, and this home is used for legal and tax purposes. Subject, said **STREET**, was finally divorced from **BARBARA STEINER** in March, 1943, remarried, to **SIBBOLD STEINER**, with whom he lived after this marriage in New York City. Subject has a sister in Carmel, another in Watsonville, another in Berkeley, all California cities. The husband of the sister residing in Carmel is a Lt. Colonel in Africa, attached to the Transport Service, U.S. Army.

Subject's former wife **BARBARA**, stated **STREET**, lives in Carmel, California. **CAROL STEINER**, against her husband's wishes, registered as a communist. This action reflected unfavorably against her husband.

Subject's father, continued **STREET**, had been a treasurer of Monterey County, California for fifteen years. His mother was a well known clubwoman in Salinas, California.

STREET said he had received a letter from Subject, May 25, 1943, in which Subject stated he was leaving for England very shortly as a correspondent and special writer of the New York **HERALD TRIBUNE**.

STREET was positive Subject was not a communist, had no communist leanings, that his honesty, loyalty and integrity were of the best, that he was intensely patriotic, and would make an excellent officer if able to use his writing talent.

AGENT'S NOTES

Informant, and his law firm, have a reputation in Monterey for conservatism.

MEMO

MARTIN FRANKEL
Special Agent CIB

CONFIDENTIAL

Salinas, California
May 26, 1943
Case No. II-O/S-14305c

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBERG
125 Hardley Avenue
Pacific Grove, California

Appointments Check

On May 26, 1943 this Agent interviewed FREDERICK E. BECHOLT, Postmaster, Carmel, California, in connection with the investigation of Subject, who has applied for a Commission in the United States Army.

BECHOLT stated as follows:

1. Subject's wife worked, in 1934, on a DPA-giving project so that her husband, Subject, could continue writing. At this time he was getting material for GRAPES OF WRATH. Wife referred to his first wife, CAROL STEINBERG, now a resident of Carmel, California.

2. BECHOLT said he was well acquainted with Subject in his earlier writing days, around 1932-1934.

3. Subject associated with communists and radicals only to get material for his writings.

4. Subject is not a communist. He believed that the communist and Associated Farmers were both squeezing the migratory workers.

5. Subject will associate with anyone or any group who will furnish material for his writing.

6. Subject is an excellent writer.

7. Subject's association with the communists is selfish - to learn about them so he can write about them.

8. Subject would make a good officer if he can use his writing talent.

9. Subject understands the leftist element and wouldn't stand for subversive stockpiling writings.

10. Subject is fundamentally a good citizen.

11. Subject is more genuine in his disbelief in communism than a lot of people who call themselves conservative.

12. If Subject had been of draft age he would not have tried in any way to avoid the draft; he would have gladly entered the army, hoping to procure more material to use in his writings.

13. Subject's loyalty, honesty and integrity is of the highest.

AGENT'S NOTE

BECHOLT appeared to be very sincere, and attempting to offer fact as well as opinion.

MARTIN FRANKEL
Special Agent CIC

CONFIDENTIAL
MEMO H

CONFIDENTIAL

Salinas, California
May 28, 1943
Case No. IX-0/S-14305c

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICE IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBECK
325 E. Wiley Avenue
Pacific Grove, California

Re: Acquaintance Check.

On May 28, 1943 this Agent interviewed Mrs. CAROL STEINBECK, Carmel, California, in connection with the investigation of Subject, who has applied for a commission in the United States Army.

CAROL STEINBECK stated that Subject does not have any fixed political beliefs, that he is a registered Democrat, and probably, on a broad basis, favors the New Deal.

CAROL STEINBECK said Subject got all his material for the GRAPES OF WRATH from the Farm Security Administration. His writings, according to informant, come before everything else in his life, and writing has been his passion since childhood.

CAROL STEINBECK said that Subject is not nor ever has been a member of the communist party, or even a sympathizer. She said that she had once registered as a Communist to see what would happen and what the reaction would be in a small town. Now she regrets this move because it caused comment that reflected upon Subject.

According to CAROL STEINBECK, Subject would make an excellent officer of the United States Army if he was assigned to duties wherein he could use his talent for writing. He is loyal, she asserted, honest and his integrity cannot be questioned.

AGENT'S NOTES

Subject was divorced from CAROL STEINBECK March, 1942, and final March, 1943. Subject has remarried. Informant appeared to be sincere but did not give Subject the benefit of any doubts. She did not volunteer a great deal of information, and seemed to feel that resentful of the mention of Subject's name.

MARTIN FRANKEL
Special Agent CIG

MEMO I

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California
June 11, 1943
Case No. I X-0/S-14305c

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBECK
15041 Del Gado Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

RE: Check of Voter's Registration
Files Santa Clara County, Calif.

On 9 June 1943 this Agent check the Voter's Registration files Santa Clara County, California to secure information concerning the Subject, who is being considered for a commission in the Army of the United States.

Registration files show that Subject's former wife, CAROL STEINBECK, registered as a Communist in Santa Clara County, 8 November 1938. On 16 September 1939, approximately one year later, Subject's wife registered in Santa Clara County as a Democrat. On the 13 June 1942, CAROL STEINBECK transferred her voting registration to Monterey, California.

No record was found of Subject having registered at any time as a Communist in Santa Clara County.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, C I C

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMO J

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

San Francisco, California
13 July 1943
Case No. IX-0/S-14305c

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

Subject: JOHN E. STENROCK
15041 Del Gado Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

Re: Credit Check

On 13 July 1943 this Agent checked the records of the Retail Credit Association, 153 Stockton Street, San Francisco, California regarding the Subject. These records include reports from the Retail Merchant's Association of San Jose, California covering Santa Clara County.

The credit records indicate that the Subject enjoyed an excellent rating in 1940, had very good commercial and savings accounts in various California banks. Subject's income stated to be solely from writings and sale of stories to the motion picture industry.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, CIO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMO K

San Francisco, California,
May 1, 1943,
Case No. IX-O/S-14305c.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

Subjects: JOHN E. STEINBECK, aka Dr. Beckstein,
15041 Del Gado Drive,
Sherman Oaks, California.

Re: Police check.

On February 23, 1943, this Agent checked the records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, 12th Naval District, the American Legion Radical Research Bureau, the San Francisco Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the San Francisco Police Department, all of San Francisco, California, regarding Subject.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the San Francisco Police Department reported no record of Subject.

The Office of Naval Intelligence reported the following records:

"DMO files refer to one John STEINBECK, P. O. Box 321, Los Gatos, Calif., who was a subscriber to the PEOPLE'S WORLD as of Sept., 1939. (It should be noted that John STEINBECK, the author, also maintained a home in Los Gatos)"

The American Legion Radical Research Bureau reported the following:

11/9-1936: Was Pacific Weekly contributor. Red publication at Carmel.
11/15-1936: One of the sponsors of the Assembly of Youth, January 9 and 10.
4/1-1938: Contributed article in this issue of Pacific Weekly (Red publication) re: The Racial Prejudice Among the Agricultural Workers in California.
10/17: Chairman of the newly formed Committee to Aid Agricultural Organization. (Very Red outfit).
6/4-1939: His book "The Grapes of Wrath" was branded as Red propaganda by Father A. D. Spearman, S.J., director of the library of Loyola, U.L.A.

His former wife, Carol Henning Steinbeck, was registered Communist, Santa Clara County - 1938 - while living at Rt. 1, Box 98-D, Los Gatos.

NICHOLAS ZAVITSKY,
Special Agent, CIC.

12

MEMO L

(C O N F I D E N T I A L)

San Francisco, California
11 June 1943
Case No. IX-O/S-14305e

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBECK
15041 Del Gado Drive
Sherman Oaks, California

RE: Police Check

On 8 June 1943 this Agent checked the records of the Sheriff's office, Santa Clara County, California and the Police Department, Los Gatos, California, regarding the Subject.

Police Department, Los Gatos . . . No Record.

Sheriff's Office, Santa Clara County . . . No Record.

CHARLES O. SHIELDS
Agent, CIC

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

MEMO M

40

CONFIDENTIAL

Salinas, California
May 26, 1943
Case No. IX-QA-14305e

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: JOHN E. STEINBECK
425 Hardley Avenue
Pacific Grove, California

RE: Police Check.

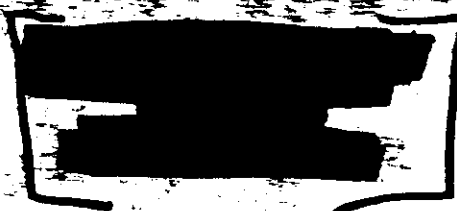
On May 26, 1943 this Agent checked the records of the Salinas Police Department, Salinas, California, the Carmel Police Department, Carmel, California, and the Monterey Police Department, Monterey, California in connection with the investigation of Subject, who is being considered for a commission in the Army of the United States.

Salinas, California Police Department.....No Record
Carmel, California, Police Department.....No Record
Monterey, California Police Department.....No Record

MARTIN FRANKEL
Special Agent in Charge

MEMO N
CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. E. A. Tamm	_____
Mr. Clegg	_____
Mr. Coffey	_____
Mr. Glavin	_____
Mr. Ladd	_____
Mr. Nichols	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Tracy	_____
Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. Carson	_____
Mr. Hendon	_____
Mr. Mumford	_____
Mr. Jones	_____
Mr. Quinn Tamm	_____
Mr. Nease	_____
Miss Gandy	_____



(S)

Director,

Re: JOHN STEINBECK
Mexico Latin American Matters

Dear Sir:

There are enclosed for the Bureau's information two copies of a memorandum for the Ambassador dated March 22, 1944, containing information relative to this individual and to ERNEST HEMINGWAY, well-known writer.

[Redacted block] (S) b1

Very truly yours,

Birch D. O'Neal
Birch D. O'Neal
Civil Attaché

BDO:N:MKI

Enclosures - 2

11-29-77
CLASS. & EXT. BY 3907 paf/mab
REASON-FCIM II, 1-2.4.2
DATE OF REVIEW 11-29-87

CLASSIFIED DECISIONS FINALIZED
BY DEPARTMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)
DATE: 11/29/02

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1257181

CLASSIFIED BY 1257
EXEMPT FROM GDS. CATEGORY 3
DATE OF DECLASSIFICATION INDEFINITE 10/4/78

EX - 19

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

100-106227-4

181 27 MAR 27 1944

S.I. 9B

4 APR 10 1944

SECRET

SECRET

Re: JOHN STEINBERG

Page Two

[REDACTED]

HDO'N:MKI

Birch D. O'Neal
Civil Attaché

cc: Bureau (2)

SECRET

SECRET

43

~~SECRET~~

March 22, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE AMBASSADOR;

Re: JOHN STEINBECK

As you know, John Steinbeck is a well-known writer who is presently working in Mexico City as a correspondent for the "New York Tribune".

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CLASSIFIED DECISIONS
BY DEPARTMENT REVIEW (DRC)
DATE: 11-29-89 *DR/duel*

CLASS. & EXT. BY 3901 11-2-87
REASON-FCIM 11, 1-2.4.2 3
DATE OF REVIEW 11-29-89
COPIES DESTROYED
APR 8 1971

CLASSIFIED BY 1259
EXEMPT FROM GDS. CATEGORY 3
DATE OF DECLASSIFICATION INDEFINITE 10/17/78
990/duel

SECRET

ENCLOSURE

100-106224-4

CONFIDENTIAL

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: April 8, 1944

FROM : SAC, San Antonio

SUBJECT: JOHN ERNST STEINBECK
Incoming Passenger, Brownsville, Texas
3/15/44
FOREIGN TRAVEL CONTROL

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

Reference is made to Bureau memorandum to San Antonio dated March 21, 1944, in the above-captioned matter. For the information of the New York City Office, reference memorandum advised that an investigation was conducted by Military Intelligence Division concerning the above-captioned individual to determine his loyalty and suitability to hold a commission in the Army of the United States, and that information had been received by the Bureau indicating that in view of substantial doubt as to the loyalty and discretion of the subject, a recommendation was made that he should not be considered favorably for a Commission in the U. S. Army. (LXW)

This is to advise that on March 15, 1944, the subject, accompanied by his wife, GWYN CONGER STEINBECK, entered Brownsville, Texas, via Pan American Clipper enroute from the Reforma Hotel, Mexico, D. F. to their residence at 330 E. 51st Street, New York City. At the time of their entry, it was ascertained that the subject was an American citizen born at Salinas, California, on February 27, 1902, and that his wife was also an American citizen, having been born in Chicago, Illinois, October 25, 1913. It was also learned that the subject is presently employed as a writer by the New York Herald Tribune and that in 1943 he had been on a six-months assignment to England, Africa, and Sicily as a war correspondent.

The subject advised that on that assignment he had been slightly wounded and that the purpose of his present two-months trip to Mexico City had been to regain his health before resuming his work for the above-mentioned newspaper.

The above is being submitted for the information of the Bureau and a copy of this letter has been designated for the information of the New York City Office. No further action in this matter is presently contemplated by this Office.

DECLASSIFIED BY 2333 Pem Army letter dtd 8-2-78
ON 1-22-79

ERM:am

6-22-79

CC New York City

CLASSIFIED BY 1259
EXEMPT FROM GDS, CATEGORY 2
DATE OF DECLASSIFICATION INDEFINITE 10/4/78

RECORDED & INDEXED

EX-2

157

CONFIDENTIAL

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) OF
DATE 4/15/44

61 APR 24 1944

100-106224-4X

100-166188-3

F B I

19 APR 15 1944

H/E

Found Soviets Eager for Peace, Capa, Steinbeck Tell Trib Forum

The word most frequently heard during their recent tour of the Soviet Union was "peace," author John Steinbeck and photographer Robert Capa told the fourth session of the Herald Tribune Forum Wednesday evening.



GEN. A. CORY, of St. Louis, shared half of the 1947 Nobel Prize in Medicine and Physiology with her husband, Prof. F. Cory. The other half of the award, which was made in two parts, went to Bernardo A. Houssay of Buenos Aires. The Corys were honored for the joint discovery of catalytic metabolism of glycogen, and Houssay, for his research on

Capa read a joint report of their observations while visiting the Ukraine, Georgia and Great Russian industrial cities as a self-styled "cold war team" of correspondents.

"These people were destroyed and hurt much more than any that I have seen during my ten years of battlefields and they hate war more than any one I ever talked to," declared Capa.

He said a halt of the "vicious and insane game" of recriminations between Russia and the U. S. would find immediate approval among Russian masses. He stated Russians were particularly interested in hearing about "the persecution of liberals" in America and that he and Steinbeck told them "to our knowledge there are no political prisoners in the United States yet."

"I am holding my fingers crossed," he told the Forum audience. . . . "We do not know who started this vicious and insane game of stupid accusation and violent criticism. It is not very important who started it. The important thing is who is going to stop it."

"The people of Russia in our little experience want the same things our people do — food, shelter, security and the ability to raise and feed and educate their children in peace. And this is the really important thing. That is all."

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

*Excerpts of info
on Capa & Steinbeck
given to Lewis & Clark
Sept 2/20/48*

G.I.R. 2

[Handwritten signature]

This is a clipping from
Page 2 of the
DAILY WORKER

Date 10-24-47
Clipped at the Seat of
Government

FIVE

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

#43

100-106224-A
F B I
52 NOV 4 1947

EX-78

53 NOV 17 1947

46

Jan 18, 1947

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

I trust that your agents in San Francisco are watching these series of articles with much interest.

No doubt you have a file on this John Steinbeck; one of our foremost Commie inspired writers who had written many stories whose theme was to stir up class consciousness. Grapes of Wrath etc.

The most shocking element here is the fact that Steinbeck is even given space on the San Francisco, after being denounced by W. R. Hearst back in 38 or 39. As you know doubt know, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] blasted this picture Grapes of Wrath, seeing the underlying motives.

The very same executives on this paper purged this girl for her constant attack on the Commie themes emanating from Hollywood.

I wrote a letter to [REDACTED] of the Los Angeles Examiner, regarding this Steinbeck, seeking to hold up the articles. Also asking just who was responsible for this right about face. It seems that this is the only Hearst sheet that is carrying Steinbeck's series.

How can Steinbeck have such "easy access to "INSIDE THE IRON CURTAIN" when YOU and other LOYAL Americans are forbidden to enter.

San Francisco is a veritable LITTLE MOSCOW to be sure.

I fully realize that the Examiner came out "finally" for the new Local Mayor Robinson, who ran on an Anti Commie platform. But the paper finally entered the picture after Robinson had a commanding lead. Merely stating that they were Robins... cause they figured he would win... NOT because he was the best man

RECORDED 100-106224-5
FEB 6 1948

mind you or the principles that he stood for..

When I arrived here a year ago , I proceeded to inform Robinson of Frank Havenner's record in Washington, which had been kept very much in the dark on the West Coast. With all this information it was clear sailing to be sure. This RED minority element in San Francisco is plenty dangerous , and a veritable powder keg. Of course I appreciate the fact that I am not telling you any thing that is new.

This Steinbeck running in the Examiner over Ada's dead body, a girl who was willing to sacrifice her very life for her country stands vindicated today for the fight she had even within her own ranks on this paper.

b7c I expected [REDACTED] to bring this matter to Mr. Herast's attention, who is residing as you know , in Beverly Hills..

I trust that this information will prove to be helpful to you.

With kindest regards ,

Yours most/sincerely,

b7c

[REDACTED]
San Simeon, Calif..

A Russian Journal—

Amateur Play: A Club Dance

The play reported here by John Steinbeck, with pictures by Robert Capa, was performed on a collective farm near Kiev, in the Soviet Ukraine. This farm was relatively little damaged by the Nazis, although its livestock were all killed. On the farm, 1,200 people were engaged in raising wheat, rye and corn when these two special correspondents of The San Francisco Examiner and the New York Herald Tribune visited last summer.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE evening, we walked down through the village, and past the pond, to the clubhouse. As we passed the little lake, a boat came across it, and there was music in the boat, a curious music. The instruments were a balalaika, a little drum with a small cymbal, and a concertina, and this was the dance music of the village. The players moved across the lake in the boat, and landed in front of the clubhouse.

It was quite a large building, the club. It had a small stage, and in front of the stage chess boards and checker boards, and then a dancing space, and then rows and rows of benches for spectators.

There were very few people in the club when we went in, only a few chess players. We learned that the young people come back from the fields, and have their supper and then rest for an hour, even sleep for an hour, before the evening dance.

There was a little play that night. There was a large portrait of the President of the Ukrainian Republic, and a three-piece orchestra came into the room, and set up its instruments, and began to play. Gradually the young people came in, strong girls in bare feet, their faces were washed and shiny. Only a few young men came. There were very few young men.

The girls began to dance together. They wore bright dresses, and head cloths of colored silk and wool, and their feet were almost invariably bare. And they danced with fury. The music had a rapid beat, accentuated by drums and cymbals. The bare feet beat the floor. The boys stood around and watched. Finally we asked a girl why she did not dance with the boys, and she said:

"They are good for married, but there are so few of them. I am a girl only, and I am too young to be married. And besides they are very handsome. And then she laughed and went back to her dancing."

There were so few of them, young men of marriageable age, there were very young boys, but the men who should have been there dancing with the girls were dead.

The evening of these girls is unbelievable. All day they had been working in the fields, since day light in fact, and yet after one hour sleep they were prepared to dance all night. The men at the chess tables played on, unmoved and unbothered by the noise that went on about them.

Meanwhile the company which was to play was preparing the stage, and Capa was setting up his lights to photograph the play.

PREFER DANCING—

It seemed to us that the girls were a little impatient, when the music stopped. They did not want to stop dancing for the play. It was a little propaganda play, it was called, and it was about the story was as follows: There is a girl on a farm, but she is a young girl, and she does not want to work. She wants to go to a town, and paint her nails, and see the lights, and be decorated and so on.

As the play opens, she is seen as a girl who is a brigade leader, a girl who has been decorated for her great work in the fields. The brigade leader who wants to paint her nails chooses the stage, and she chooses to go to town, whereas the other brigade leader girl stands very straight with her hands at her sides and declares her love.

The third member of the cast is the tractor driver. And the interesting thing is that he is really a tractor driver, and the play had been held up an hour and a half while he found the tractor he had been working with all day. The tractor driver had one dramatic trick, and only one, he delivered his lines twice, back and forth across the stage, smoking cigarettes.

PERIL TO SOUL—

Now the tractor driver is in love with the second girl who wants to paint her nails. He is really in love with her, and he is in grave danger of losing his soul to the dancing girl. In fact, as the play progresses, it is obvious that the tractor driver is ready to throw up his tractor, and helping the economy of the people, to move into a city, and get an apartment and live actively with the painting girl. But the brigade leader girl, standing very straight, delivers a lecture to him.

It does no good. He is obviously distraught, and he is very much in love with the dancing girl. The tractor driver had only one trick, leaving the brigade leader.

He does not know what to do. He gives up the girl he loves, and he follows her to town and becomes a clown.

Now the dancing girl goes off, leaving the brigade leader.



There is a typical scene in the clubhouse on the night of the dance.

agreed, when Capa discharged his flashlight to take his first picture. This broke the play wide open. The girl-painter girl rushed behind a bench of ferns, and didn't come out for the rest of the scene. The tractor driver lost his line. The brigade leader stumbled, and tried to pick up the play, and failed. The rest of the play was done mostly by the prompter. It was done like a scene. From the prompter's box, a read line which was taken from the notes of the actors, and read to the actors, and one had a double version, but then they nearly got their lines again, Capa cut off the lights, and threw them.

The tractor driver was delighted, and approached wildly every time the lights came on.

The dancing girl's light was indicated both with a flashlight and with strings of lights.



Dancing in the clubhouse of the collective farm. The orchestra is composed of a balalaika, a little drum, and a concertina.

with the tractor driver. And the brigade leader, with feminine wit, tells the tractor driver that this girl does not really love him because he is such an unimportant tractor driver, and she would soon be sick of him. The tractor driver does not believe this, and so the brigade leader says with a flash of inspiration:

"I have it. You proceed to make love to me, and when you see as you will find how much she loves you."

This notion is accepted. The girl-painter makes an entrance to find the tractor driver holding the brigade leader in his arms, and to see behind, not what you would expect happiness, for the slowly girl decides that she will become a tractor driver in a moment. She will stay on the farm, she turns her fury on the tractor driver, she says:

"I will form my own brigade, not only you can be an ornament and decorated. I myself will become a brigade leader and wear decorations."

PLAY BROKEN UP—

This solves the tractor driver's problems, both amorous and economic, and the play closes with everybody feeling pretty good about the whole thing.

This is the story of the play, but this is not how it really was. The tractor driver had only one trick, leaving the brigade leader, and the story had only

one trick, leaving the brigade leader.

and the girls dance.

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SAN FRANCISCO: 244 M

44

Kiev-the Ruined City

CHAPTER IV

VERY PRETTY

Although Kier is greatly de-
pressed, he is not alone. The
people in Kiev did not want to
have the dead wariness of the
Holocaust people. They did not
know when they walked, their
shoulders were back, and they
laughed in the streets. Of course
it might be racial. Of course
the Ukrainians are not of the Rus-
sians in race, they are a separate
species of Slav. And while most
Ukrainians can speak and read
Russian, their own language is
separate apart and separate.
Granger to the south.

FINE LUNCH—

in the afternoon we were

FIGHT—
 "I walked over a footbridge
 over a road, and below
 was a bus stop. And in
 the middle of the bus stop
 a fight we have seen in a
 film. The Russian rules for
 fighting are inexorable. Every
 one stood in line to get into
 the bus or bus. There are
 no rules. There are ex-
 ceptions to this rule: pregnant
 women with children, the
 old and the crippled do not
 stand in line. They go in
 first. It is every one else must
 wait."

into the bus, whereupon she dived in after him, snatched it

appeared entirely.

FEARED—The German man said that even if it were used it could only damage them, and he said: "Our arms are destroyed already. How can it do?" And he said: "If we were invaded we could defend ourselves. Just as we did with the Germans. We and ourselves alone."

defend our country
lifetime? We said

...the war is just

borrow John Steinbeck
 On the same, the pro
 can be found in
 on his trip thro
 Union for the Nat
 arding and the N
 Tribune
 EXTRA LEAD BY JOHN STEINBECK


Abstract

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26



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1998

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the snow
the forests and in the
They spoke anxiously



1

10



January 26, 1948

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&
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San Simon, California

Dear [REDACTED]

Your letter dated January 18, 1948,
with enclosures, has been received, and I want
to express my appreciation to you for having
brought this matter to my attention.

Sincerely yours,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

VNP:mjl

NOTE: This individual has corresponded with the
Bureau on several previous occasions on matters
of similar nature, and now draws the Director's
attention to John Steinbeck as a Communist in
connection with a series of articles Steinbeck
wrote concerning Russia.

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Egan
Mr. Gurnea
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Pennington

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

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Book Parade

John Steinbeck's A Russian Journal

By Robert Friedman

JOHN STEINBECK'S warm sympathy for people, as evidenced in his *A Russian Journal*, (published today) is the one positive feature of an account of a visit to the Soviet Union which is otherwise overrun with frivolous provincialism and a coy disinclination to face political realities.

Steinbeck has taken out the conventional insurance against criticism by concluding that his journal

A RUSSIAN JOURNAL by John Steinbeck. With photographs by Robert Capa. Viking. New York. \$2.50 pp. \$3.75.

will not be satisfactory either to the ecclesiastical Left nor the Lumpen Right. The first will say it is anti-Russian, and the second that it is pro-Russian. Surely it is superficial, and how could it be otherwise? We have no conclusions to draw, except that Russian people are like all other people in the world. Some bad ones there are surely, but by far the greater number are very good."

Now the above is pretty childish stuff. It is a fraudulent 'objectivity' which presumes to be accurate merely because it is inconsistent and superficial enough to draw fire from all sides. And it was a waste of Mr. Steinbeck's time to discover so laboriously that all people are alike.

What a reader logically expects from a "Russian Journal" is not a platitude but an examination of the way of life of a people which right now is definitely not like that of "all other people."

THIS STEINBECK HAS NOT done, even to the minimum extent required to make impressions as to the Russian situation, to a more thorough study. This reviewer frankly could not decide whether Steinbeck's failure was due to choice or to an appalling political illiteracy.

What is one to say of a writer to whom the distinctive characteristic of American capitalist society is that it provides a government of "checks and balances"? Or of the naïveté which has it that "our government is designed to keep anyone from getting too much power or, having got it, from keeping it"? And, "we agreed," Steinbeck writes solemnly, "that this makes our country function more slowly but that it certainly makes it function more surely."

It is foolhardy for a man who does not know the facts of life in his own backyard to fare forth as an interpreter of his neighbor.

There is little in *A Russian Journal* to indicate that Steinbeck has any comprehension of Marxism, the cause for war, the fundamental difference between capitalism and socialism. He doesn't like war and he says so. He would hate to see another one. He is fond of children and good, honest people, Russian as well as any other kind.

But his *Journal* is filled with trivia which will not help people understand the first socialist state because Steinbeck himself never bothered to find out.

HE IS PROVINCIAL, in a petty way, complaining that Russians always think they have discovered or invented products or methods which Steinbeck points out, they really didn't. This, from a native of a land in which U. S. contest winners of all kinds are automatically described as unquestioned world's champions.

He writes feelingly of the reverence throughout the world for the memory of Roosevelt. Yet he complains of a like tribute by the Soviet peoples to Stalin and sneeringly intimates that Stalin was a hypocrite in objecting to adulation.

Steinbeck makes the conventional bourgeois plaint about Soviet censorship and "suspicion" of foreigners and cutely explains them as traditional Russian behaviour. Very possibly and, in the light of the author's political maturity this is not sarcastic—Steinbeck does not know of the 30-year effort through conspiracy and armed attack by capitalist states to destroy the Soviet Union.

One could go on quoting Steinbeck, but what for? *A Russian Journal* is much more enlightening about the kind of culture which develops such intellectual sad sackery than about the Soviet Union.

Robert Capa's photographs, which illustrate the text are striking and excellently reproduced.

This is a clipping from
Page 12 of the
Daily Worker

Date 4-16-48
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100-106224
FBI
MAY 8 1948
EX-138

G.I.R.

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Steinbeck Sans Wrath

Reviewed by ALLAN DANE

RUSSIAN JOURNAL. By John Steinbeck, with pictures by Robert Capa.
New York: Viking Press. 220 pages. \$3.75.

MR. STEINBECK has joined the fraternity of vodka visitors. For three weeks he toured the Soviet Union under the subtle guidance of VOKS, the government agency for "cultural liaison," saw Moscow celebrate its 800th anniversary, got stomach cramps from overeating on a collective farm, inspected the ruins of Stalingrad, was wine and dined in Georgia, flew back to Moscow, where he chattered with American officials and correspondents, came home and wrote a book.

Now Mr. Steinbeck did see a few things that may prove interesting to the average reader, and Robert Capa contributes a few nice (but not exceptional) shots of life in Russia. There are impressive descriptions of wartime destruction, of the shortage of artificial limbs, of Soviet inefficiency and "snafu." Steinbeck give some curious examples of black market activities in Russia, of transportation difficulties, of the sickening hero-worship of the leaders.

The careful reader will be able to detect a few other interesting bits of information: the survival of deep religious feeling in the country; the greater emphasis on government building rather than on residential housing construction; the utter lack of humor and the depressing serenity of Moscow, as contrasted with the climate of greater spontaneity as one gets further away from the bureaucratic center.

And yet, one cannot help questioning Mr. Steinbeck's understanding of Russia. He went to Moscow as an "honest and liberal" man, he says, to concern himself with "politics and the larger issues" but "simply to report . . . neither critically nor favorably." But how can he speak of life in a totalitarian state without constantly referring to the government

and its agencies? How sure is he that he got to the "people" and not merely to a model farm in the Ukraine and to a show-case sanatorium on the Black Sea? If Mr. Steinbeck was merely after the answers to such questions as "Do children go to school in Russia?" He could have saved himself the trouble of going. He speaks no Russian, and all his contact was made through official interpreters. Steinbeck, whom the Russians consider one of America's top figures, was wine and dined, was taken to a Moscow nightclub and to a Kiev cocktail bar, went to the country home of such Soviet millionaires as Alexander Korneichuk — and concludes that the Russians have plenty to eat; he even states that the quality of Russian clothing improved during the few weeks he spent in Russia.

HE ATTENDED the celebration of the 800th anniversary of Moscow with Louis Aragon, the French Stalinist writer, and was impressed by the splendor of festivities. Capa galloped around Moscow by a special official assigned "to facilitate his movements about the city"; "in Red Square

G.I.R.-8

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[Handwritten signatures]

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55 SEP 16 1948

he had a militia man assigned to him to make things easy and stop any unpleasantness"; yet throughout the book Steinbeck never mentioned the MVD.

Most startling, perhaps, is Steinbeck's own attitude toward the Soviet Union. His book is full of what Koestler would call false equations. When Capa is stopped from taking pictures at a lend-leased tractor plant in Stalingrad, Steinbeck reminds us that foreigners may not photograph Oak Ridge either. In his mind, "Moscowitis" and "Washingtonitis" cancel each other out. When he admits that the collective farm he was shown put on a big show for him, he insists that "any Kansas farmer" would do the same for his guests.

Steinbeck wants "peace" and hates all "curtains," iron or otherwise. He does not care about governments, good or bad. He comes up with a conclusion that is neither here nor there: "We knew nothing about the things American papers were howling about — Russian military preparations, atomic research, slave labor, the political skullduggery of the Kremlin." And he still doesn't. As a matter of fact, he is proud of his ignorance. Even Capa is led to remark that "Steinbeck is so goddam innocent that all questions posed by the curious and hero-worshipping Russian population are answered by a friendly grunt, 'This I do not know.'" When he is asked if the American people want war with Russia, he replies: "We don't know." Whether the question concerns Wallace's popularity or American foreign policy, the agnosticism and decadence

of American writing or U. S. support of reactionaries and fascists, Steinbeck's answer is invariably, "I don't know . . . no one tells us these things."

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the world-shaking conclusion to Steinbeck's conducted tour is that "the Russian people are people," "that they are very nice." He adds that they want "the same things all people want — good lives, increased comfort, security, and peace." But he does not tell us if the Russian people are getting any of these.

STEINBECK USED TO BE known as a man with a strong social conscience. *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Tortilla Flat* were full of righteous moral indignation about social and economic injustice. In *The Moon Is Down* Steinbeck made a heated if somewhat pedestrian attack on totalitarian aggression and conquest. Those were the days when Steinbeck could be counted upon to stand up and wield his pen in behalf of democracy and freedom. Even today had he gone to Spain or China, he would surely not have come back to write a book in order to demonstrate that the "Chinese people want good lives and comfort" or that "the Spaniards like peace."

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March 18, 1952

JOHN ERNEST STEINBECK

46576

Reference is made to your request for information subsequent to February 13, 1948, concerning John Ernest Steinbeck, the writer. The FBI has not conducted an investigation on this individual.

A review of the files however, revealed newspaper reviews from the "Daily Worker" dated April 16, 1948, and the "New Leader" dated August 21, 1948, of John Steinbeck's book, "A Russian Journal". This book was published in April, 1948, by the Viking Press in New York and contained pictures by Robert Capa. The publication was based on experiences which the two "self-styled cold war team" had on a three weeks visit to Soviet Russia during the summer of 1947.

The writers of the reviews both seemed to doubt Mr. Steinbeck's ability to portray life in Soviet Russia authoritatively since he was there for such a short period of time.

(100-106224)

The foregoing information is furnished to you as a result of a request for an FBI file check only and is not to be considered as a clearance or nonclearance of the individual involved. It is for your confidential use only and is not to be disseminated outside of your agency.

Original to State Department

S. H. Rogers:jar

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Nease
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JOHN ERNST STEINBECK 46575

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA:

John Ernest Steinbeck, author, playwright and war correspondent, was born at Salinas, California, on February 27, 1902. He graduated from Salinas High School in 1918 and was a student at Stanford University for five years but did not graduate. He married Carol Henning in 1930 and was divorced from her in March, 1949. He married Gwyn Conger on March 29, 1943, and Elaine Scott on December 28, 1950. He has been the author of a number of books and was awarded the Pulitzer prize in 1940. Among the books for which he is most noted are "Tortilla Flat," 1935; "Of Mice And Men," 1937; "Grapes Of Wrath," 1939; "The Moon Is Down," 1942; "Cannery Row," 1945; "The Bayward Bus," 1947; and "A Russian Journal," 1948. He was also employed as a war correspondent and as a writer for the "New York Herald Tribune" during 1943, 1944, 1947, and 1948. Steinbeck was Vice President of World Video, Inc., an organization chartered in New York State on December 18, 1947, for the purpose of preparing television programs. ("Who's Who In America," 1952-53) 100-166188-2, [REDACTED] 100-340922-111, p. 1, 53)

BUREAU INVESTIGATION:

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EXEMPT FROM GDS. CATEGORY 2, 3
DATE OF DECLASSIFICATION INDEFINITE 10/1/78

The Bureau has conducted no investigation concerning John Steinbeck. However, under date of May 11, 1942, Attorney General Bidale forwarded to the Bureau a letter received by him from Steinbeck which stated in part "Do you suppose you could ask Edgar's boys to stop stepping on my heels? They think I am an enemy alien. It's getting tiresome." After checking the Bureau files the Attorney General was advised that Steinbeck was not being and never had been investigated. (100-106224-1)

INVESTIGATION BY G-2:

Steinbeck was investigated by G-2 during 1943 to determine his suitability to hold a commission in the U. S. Army. After investigation the Chief, Counter Intelligence Branch, G-2, recommended he not be considered favorably for

11-27-77
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a commission. Investigation developed that Steinbeck's former wife, Carol, had registered as a Communist in Santa Clara County, California, on November 8, 1938, but registered as a Democrat in 1939. According to Carol, she registered as a Communist to see what would happen and to see what the reaction would be in a small town, but regretted this move because it reflected unfavorably on her husband. She and others advised that Steinbeck was a registered Democrat and probably favored the New Deal but he had never been a Communist. (X)(u)

This investigation also revealed that Steinbeck contributed articles to the November 9, 1936, and April 1, 1938, issues of "Pacific Weekly," cited as a Communist publication by the California Committee on Un-American Activities. He also subscribed to the "Daily People's World," west coast Communist newspaper, as of September 1939. (X)(u) Per Army

Associates and friends of Steinbeck advised G-2 that he was honest, loyal, patriotic, and an excellent and sincere writer. They stated that although he exercised poor discretion during his early days of writing by associating with some elements of the Communist Party, he was not interested in advancing the cause of the Party but in gathering material for his writings on certain social conditions existing in the United States at that time. They reported that he wrote various articles which were published by Communist organizations because the economic views expressed were considered radical. However, he rejected Communist political and economical theories repeatedly and discarded his association with that element when it became apparent that his prestige was being used to further interests of the Party. (G-2; 100-166188-2) (X)(u) Per Army

AFFILIATION WITH COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS:

During 1938, Steinbeck granted the Simon J. Lubin Society of California, Inc., permission to republish his pamphlet entitled "Their Blood Is Strong," a story of the migratory agricultural workers in California, which was originally published in 1936. According to the California Committee on Un-American Activities, the Simon J. Lubin Society, Inc., was a Communist front for California agrarian penetration, organized in the Fall of 1936 by Unit 104 of the Professional Section of the Communist Party. (61-7559-2-993)

In approximately 1938, the Committee to Aid Agricultural Workers was organized under Steinbeck's leadership. Steinbeck also served as chairman of this organization which has been referred to as the John Steinbeck Committee to Aid Agricultural Workers. According to one source of unknown reliability, this committee was organized after Steinbeck had exposed the situation of the migrant farmers and "Okies" in his books. This source stated there was nothing political in the work of the committee, the purpose being to gather food and clothing for those in need. Another source indicated that the committee furnished financial assistance to the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America. Many of the supporters of this organization were known to be Communist Party members or people who had been active in behalf of Communist United front organizations. The American Legion Radical Research Bureau described this committee as a "very Red outfit."

b2
b7c
b7d [redacted] Los Angeles member of the committee;
100-166188-2; 100-339317-1; 100-6633-2, p. 104;
100-3-23-16, p. 12)

John Steinbeck was one of the sponsors and delegates to the Western Writers Congress (declared to be a subsidiary of the American Writers Congress, cited by the HCUA) conference held in San Francisco, California, on November 13 and 14, 1936. (Dies Committee Hearing, Volume 9, Page 1996)

Steinbeck was active in the League of American Writers (cited by the Attorney General) during 1938-1940, serving that organization as one of the vice presidents in 1939 and as one of the board of directors of the California League of American Writers in 1940. He also furnished that organization with a statement for publication in a booklet published during May, 1938, and signed an open letter to all Senators and members of the House of Representatives during 1939. (61-7759-667812; 100-7322-8, 16; 61-7551-183110; 61-7561-2-87)

Steinbeck was among those who signed an open letter to the Government and People of the United States sponsored by the Washington Committee to Lift the Spanish Embargo (cited as a Communist front by the California Committee on Un-American Activities) on January 31, 1939. ("New York Times," 121-23278-267112, p. 1506)